

Miscellaneous Notes

1. TAXONOMIC STATUS OF *MEGADERMA SPASMA MAJUS* ANDERSEN (CHIROPTERA: MEGADERMATIDAE)

While studying the collections of *Megaderma spasma* present in the Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta, I came across some specimens of *M. spasma horsfieldi* Blyth and *M. spasma majus* Andersen which were found to be very difficult to separate. An attempt has here been made to settle the taxonomic status of *Megaderma spasma majus* Andersen.

Material examined: INDIA: Karnataka, 5♂♂, 4♀♀; Andhra Pradesh, 1♀; Maharashtra, 1♂, 2♀♀; Tamil Nadu, 1♀; Goa, 3♀♀; Andaman Island, 1♀; Meghalaya, 1♂, 2♀♀; BURMA: Pegu, 5 (unsexed); Lower Chindwin, 1♀; Tenasserim, 1♂, 2♀♀.

Andersen (1918) separated *M. s. majus* from *M. s. horsfieldi* only on the length of forearm, 62-63 mm vs. 54-58.5 mm. Ellerman & Morrison Scott (1951) accepted them as separate subspecies. However, as may be seen from the measurements given by Andersen and those of my specimens (Table), there is com-

plete overlap in the length of the forearm of the two subspecies. The Table also shows that there is no difference in the measurements of other external and skull characters of the two sub-species. *Megaderma spasma majus* Andersen (1918) should, therefore, be considered a synonym of *M. s. horsfieldi* Blyth 1863.

Ellerman & Morrison-Scott (1951) gave the range of distribution of *M. s. horsfieldi* as Peninsula of India and that of *M. s. majus* as lower Chindwin, Burma. Kurup (1968) recorded the species from Kamrup, Meghalaya. The present range of distribution of *M. s. horsfieldi* on the basis of above mentioned specimens is Peninsular India, Assam, Andamans and Burma.

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